

The Key Volunteer Network proudly presents...

Volume 1, Issue 3

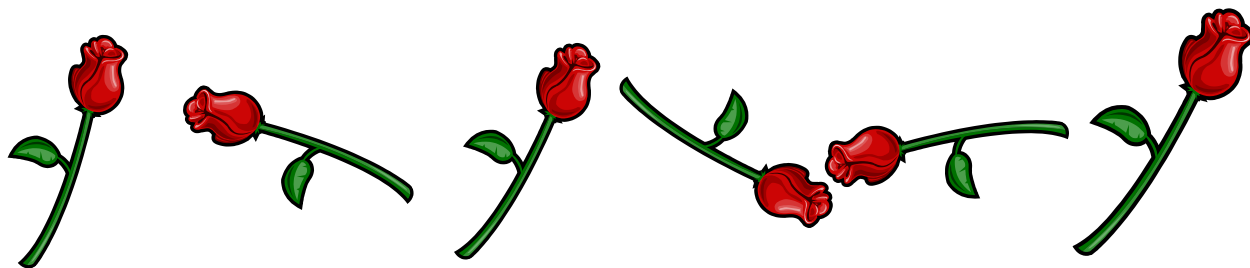
February 2006

THE ROSE

THIS IS A PUBLICATION PROVIDED BY THE 1ST BN 25TH MAR FAMILY READINESS TEAM

Bravo... Bravo!

The Family Readiness Team would like to welcome the families of Marines serving in Bravo Company within the 1st Battalion 25th Marines. Within this newsletter, you will occasionally hear from the Battalion Commanding Officer, the Battalion Sergeant Major and Company First Sergeant regarding what your Marine is up to. You will also hear from your Key Volunteer(s) with personal experiences or anything else they would like to share with you. We hope you find "The Rose" informative and inspirational during the deployment. Enjoy!



Key Volunteer Network Contact Quick Reference

Key Volunteer

Serving Company

Best way to contact

Rebecca Tracy	Alpha Company (Families located in Maine)	207-329-0537/rtracey1@maine.rr.com
Kathleen Covell kcovell@comcast.net	Alpha Company (families located in Massachusetts)	978-793-0341/
Sheila Hovasapian	Alpha Company (3rd Platoon)	hovasapian@verizon.net
Michelle Proulx	Bravo Company	michelleproulx@yahoo.com
Danielle Sabourin DSabourinKV@cs.com	H & S Company	508-966-3137/
Colleen Stone	H & S Company	csstone4@juno.com
Julie Delcourt	Battalion /Weapons Company	juliedelcourt@comcast.net

There is no better Valentine than a U.S. Marine or Sailor!

FROM THE BATTALION COMMANDING OFFICER

Lieutenant Colonel Chris Landro

It is with great pride that I report to you the exceptional progress that has been made by the Marines and Sailors of 1st Battalion, 25th Marines. We have now completed our first 2 ½ months of training and our unit cohesion is evidenced in our fluid and successful mission execution. Your Marines and Sailors are working extremely hard under harsh and exhausting conditions as we prepare for our upcoming deployment to Iraq. By the time you read this letter you will hopefully have had an opportunity to hear first hand from your loved ones as we complete our block leave period. Upon our return from this period we will complete final preparations for our culminating 26-day training event called "Mojave Viper". During this exercise we will be tested to the limits of our endurance and decision-making abilities and we will learn, as we have at every stage of our pre-deployment training, that we have greater capacity both physically and mentally than we thought existed going into the event.

You should be very proud of your Marines and Sailors. I know I am. It is an honor and a privilege to lead these fine young men. I do not take this responsibility lightly. You have my assurance that your loved ones will be extremely well equipped and trained to carry out our mission in Iraq. They are truly great Americans and each represents what is best about this country in their own way. They are forming friendships and bonds of brotherhood that will be cherished their entire lives. As we head toward uncertainty it is the very certainty of this bonding that will see us through to the end of a successful tour. I know the anxiety that exists at home but you must take comfort in the knowledge that your loved one is in good hands and that we will take care of each other. They are willing to take on levels of sacrifice that few can even comprehend. They ask for little in return except your love and prayers and the thoughts of a grateful Nation.

Semper Fidelis,
LtCol Christopher Landro

OOH-RAH!!

FROM THE BATTALION SERGEANT MAJOR

Sergeant Major Bradley Trudell

Greetings to all from 29 Palms in sunny southern California. By the time this is published we will have been mobilized for nearly three months. During that time we have transitioned from our various occupations, circumstances and locations into a cohesive Combat Unit ready to deploy to Iraq. That simple statement belies the tremendous effort that has gone into the equipping, training, moving and caring for 1000 plus, Marines and Sailors of 1st Battalion 25th Marines. We have come together from 10 training centers in 8 states, with Marines and sailors coming individually from many more states across the country. We have traveled across the continent from frozen New England to the high desert of California, demonstrating our ability to operate in every clime and place.

We have sat through classes, marched many miles, driven many miles, slept under the stars, fired hundreds of thousands of rounds as we continue to prepare to deploy. We have broken equipment and maintained and repaired gear. We have received and issued new gear. We have tried many things, and discovered what works and what doesn't. Each day we are getting better, and we will continue.

Through all of this I am thankful for the opportunity to be part of this with these very fine men. I am grateful to the families back home that provide the support to your loved ones necessary to carry out this endeavor. I humbly acknowledge the sacrifices each member of this great extended family, the Marines, Sailors and our loved ones are making. Our success is guaranteed by our enthusiasm, commitment and confidence that is displayed daily.

Semper Fidelis,
SgtMaj Brad Trudell



FROM THE ALPHA COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

First Sergeant Albert Lodi



A bird lands on the Alpha Company Guidon
This is good luck!

January and February were two very busy months. After mobilization to 29-Palms, the training has been tough. There has been lots of motivational humps, live fire ranges and we spend an average of six days a week in the field on various ranges. So if your Marines aren't answering their phones to often, that's the reason why.

Alpha Co has completed "Stu Segal Studios at Miramar" where Hollywood actors actually interacted with our Marines in various scenarios to make the Iraqi transition easier. The training was fantastic. Our next stage of training will be very tough as we prepare for the rest of the tour. Keep writing, calling and supporting your Marines. ***It makes a dif-***

ference. The mail and packages have been flowing in. It almost seems over whelming. An enormous thank you to all of our families showing support! - 1stSgt Lodi Alpha Company 1/25

It is an honor to promote these Marines to the following ranks:

LCpl Cloutier

LCpl Yee

LCpl Xavier

And frocking* Staff Sergeant Singley

frocking- to promote to a higher rank earlier than the Marine is scheduled to be promoted



The promotion of SSgt Singley. He is receiving his Staff Sergeant chevrons during a company formation

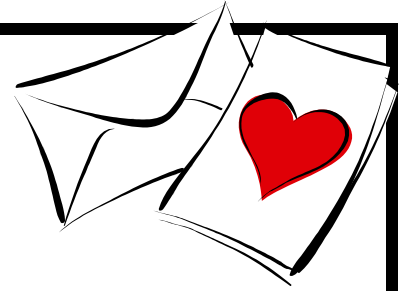


A "birds eye view" of Stu Seagul Studio's stage setting

FROM YOUR ALPHA COMPANY KEY VOLUNTEER FOR MASSACHUSETTS
KATHLEEN COVEL -PROUD MARINE MOM

A very special thanks...

To the volunteers for making 300+ Cards and Notes of Support! The Class Photos, Colorings, and Banner that was put in the Valentine box sent to the Marines of Alpha Co. was much appreciated! Our proud Marines got lots of love!



Let's Get Together, Shall We?

Alpha Company 2nd & 3rd Platoon families

On Sat., April 1st at 10 am., the Key Volunteers of Alpha Company 2nd & 3rd Platoon will be hosting a scrapbooking party at the Ft. Devens HTC located at 53 Quebec St., Ayer, MA. Please RSVP by March 20th to: kcovel@comcast.net or 978-793-0341 as seating is limited!

Photo Coach Danielle will have supplies to organize photos, and begin albums. You may also shop for fun tools and enhancements but this event is free for all attendees.

You will need to bring:

- ♥ Two or three special photos to make a Mini-Page. (All supplies provided.)
- ♥ All the of your excitement and positive energy to meet your extended Marine family!

Come & Meet other people and have fun too!

Families, give yourselves a round of applause, for doing a great job at home! Thanks for your calls and e-mails. If you need information regarding benefits, let me know, kcovel@comcast.net / 978-793-0341.



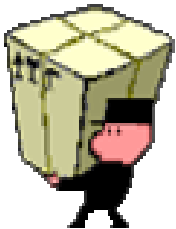
Birthdays, Anyone?

Happy Birthday to all celebrating in February and March...

Unfortunately, your Alpha Co. KVs have not tracked our Marine families' birthdays so we cannot send greetings each month. If you would like to share your DOB (we don't need the year), we would be glad to share your special day. E-mail hovasapian@verizon.net



CARE PACKAGES

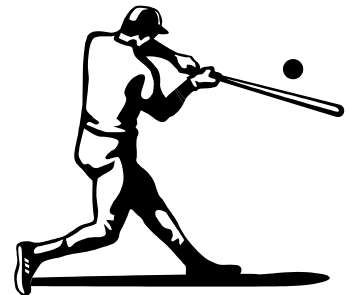


I just received a box from the US Postal Service with boxes, labels and packing tape. They delivered it to my home for FREE. You can request a Care Package Kit by calling 1-800-610-8734. Press 1 and then 1 again then press 2. Tell them you want to send care packages to your activated Marine or Sailor. You will be given a customer ID to use for re-ordering.

Got mine within one week!

Take me out to the Ball Game...

I am sure I am not alone in my excitement of the news the other day that the equipment truck for the Boston Red Sox is on its way to Florida! I for one hope that the off-season drama down on Lansdowne Street will result in a great year for my beloved Red Sox! Pitchers and catchers report this week!



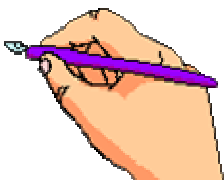
Just a reminder to let your Key Volunteer know if any of your contact information changes (phone, address, e-mail, etc.) I can be reached by e-mail at hovasapian@verizon.net or by phone at (617)630-1832.

It would be great to have families contribute to The Rose. Do you have a helpful hint that you could share with other Marine families; a website, news article, etc.? Please

e-mail to hovasapian@verizon.net

Sheila Hovasapian

Key Volunteer – Alpha Company



Major Brian T. Hofmann

As Bravo Company continues to prepare for our impending deployment to Iraq, the Marines are being exposed to a myriad of new challenges. We have been training hard with few breaks and little time off. The Marines have completed a wide range of training in Twenty-nine Palms, all designed to prepare them for the mission we face in Iraq. A special emphasis has been placed on patrolling and combat in urban areas, conducting convoy operations and fighting as a close-knit combat team. Additionally, considerable emphasis has been placed on physical conditioning and acclimatization to the harsh desert environment. Quite a few of your Marines have become proficient with the Arabic language, a skill that will serve them well in our interaction with the Iraqi people. Your Marines have worked very hard in our preparation for our deployment and have made great strides in their combat and survival capabilities. The Bravo Company Marines are some of the finest men that I've ever had the pleasure of knowing and I am proud to be their commanding officer. You all have just cause to be very proud of your Marines.

Semper Fidelis,

Brian T. Hofmann

Major, USMC

Congratulations to the Marines who have been promoted to the following ranks:

GySgt Shawn P. Demenkow

Sgt Stephen P. McLaughlin

Sgt Steven J. Orr

Cpl Donald R. Weeks III

Cpl Jonathan M. Palm

LCpl Peter J. Figiel, Jr.

LCpl Peter J. Figiel, Jr.

LCpl Kenneth C. Dinjian Jr.

LCpl Brian W. Bickmore

LCpl Ivon JeanJacques Jr.

LCpl Harold J. Litchfield



All of the Marines listed below received a Meritorious Mast for their honorable service during the annual Toys for Tots Campaign in 2005:

LCpl Nicholas Koutalakis

LCpl Peter J. O'Sullivan

LCpl Moussa B. Mikolo

LCpl Ugochukwu U. Ojimba

PFC Douglas B. Kramer

FROM THE HEADQUARTERS & SERVICE COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

First Sergeant Leon Rideout

The Marines of H&S Company have been kept extremely busy supporting the Battalion along with our intense training. H & S is meeting the challenges and performing in an outstanding manner as to be expected. Our Marines have had the pleasure of participating in the excellent training that Seagal Studios facilitated which we considered very realistic and has been a great learning tool for all.

- 1stSgt Leon Rideout



H & S Company experiences the reenactment of an explosion within a heavily populated Iraqi city with the help of the actors of Seagal Studios of Hollywood, CA

Please welcome
Sgt Carnevale's wife Deanna
and
Cpl Espejos' wife Cynthia
to our
H&S Company family



Congrats to the recently promoted

SSgt Munoz *
 Sgt Demetrius *
 Sgt Thomas
 Sgt Stone *
 Cpl Denzer *
 Cpl Leveille
 LCpl Keay
 LCpl Laegel *
 LCpl Stewart
 LCpl Redmond *
 LCpl Camacho
 Lcpl Hersey

* Please see photos on next page

First Sergeant Leon Rideout



SSgt Munoz receives his chevrons



Sgt Demetrius receives his chevrons



Sgt Stone receives his chevrons



LCpl Laegel receives his chevrons



LCpl Redmond receives his chevrons



Cpl Denzer receives his chevrons

OPERATION PAPERBACK

- RECYCLED READING FOR OUR TROOPS

I wanted to tell everyone about a website that my sister recently sent me. It's called operationpaperback.org. It's a non-profit, grassroots program that collects "gently" used books and sends them to American troops deployed overseas. The organization receives many thanks and praise from the troops who are glad to be appreciated. Reading a book during a service members' downtime gives them the chance to escape from the stress of the day.

Common requests from the troops include those with the following topics: action, best-sellers, biographies and memoirs, history, horror, mysteries, science-fiction and true crime. Unless a specific request for romance novels has been made, it's best to leave these at home! Some books are not recommended, so it's best to check the website. It's amazing how one book can be appreciated many times over. As one unit leaves to go home, the books are left behind for a new unit to appreciate. To date, the organization has sent over 300,000 books since 1999.

It's a great idea to support out troops who sacrifice their lives everyday by letting them know how much they are appreciated and remembered.

Colleen Stone

H & S Company Key Volunteer



DANIELLE SABOURIN—PROUD MARINE WIFE



Hello everyone!!

Happy Valentine's Day to all!!! In this month set aside for love – I feel the need to show a bit of love here—I have to say I have had some of the best conversations with many of you in the last month. I LOVE getting to know all of you and becoming part of your experience!!! Keep the calls and e-mails coming – I love them!

I find myself wanting to send emails to all of the families on my list; but I do not want to do so in a bulk email without first checking with all of you. If any of you do not want your email address included in bulk emails, please let me know ASAP. If I don't hear from you I am assuming it is fine. For those of you who didn't furnish your email address; I strongly urge you to do so. It is the fastest way for you to get information.

Well, we made it through a calendar month – whoo hoo!! I don't know about you but that feels good turning the page! Look at it this way – we are one month closer to homecoming and one month closer to warmer weather!!!

I have come across some interesting tidbits so I thought I would pass them along to you...

- ♥ All sovereign bank military customers are exempt from ATM fees when overseas. Just show a copy of your Marine or Sailors orders and they will code the account to reflect the exemption.
- ♥ TurboTax is now available to service members via Military OneSource. Military OneSource is providing access to this great service at no cost to service members. Logon to file your taxes as soon as you receive your W-2.

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

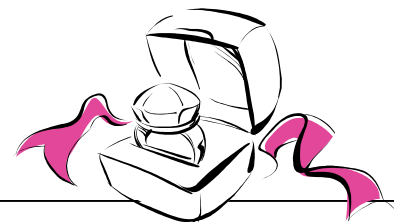
In closing... I look forward to speaking and meeting with all of you!! Any input on what you would like to see in the newsletter?? Send me an email or give me a call!!! I have enclosed a paragraph that really moved me – it is from "Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul"... enjoy. It could also be applied to parents of our men and women in uniform.

"The Unseen Veteran" by Amanda Legg

"I am an unseen veteran. So are all the other military spouses out there. We have different battlefields. Our maps have pins in the countries of worry, heartache and loneliness. Our battles will end when our husbands are in our arms again. Until that day, I say thank you to all the invisible soldiers who are there for each other, who are there for me. We lend a strong shoulder when needed, and we keep up a brave front at home. The war could not be won without us."

Again – this could apply to the parents out there as well. Have a great passage about the life of military parents?? Share it with me so I can share it in the newsletter!!

Warmest regards,
Danielle Sabourin
Key Volunteer H&S Co
508-966-3137
DsabourinKV@cs.com



Congratulations to
Corporal Healey and his fiancée Colleen Boisvert
who recently became engaged!!

First Sergeant Charles Delcourt



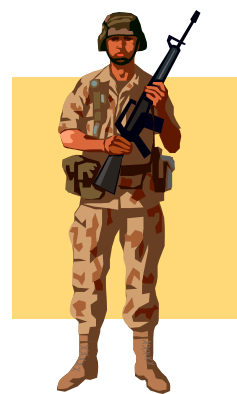
After division schools, Weapons Company has continued training in the “field” which is also known as the Mojave Desert. We are focusing in on Convoy training, MOUT (military operations in urban terrain), and squad training as the company breaks into five MAP platoons (Mobile Assault Platoons). The company will operate as

MAP platoons once they are in theatre.

Weapons Company has completed the operations within Stu Seagall Productions in Miramar, where the Marines have a taste of what it will be like when our “boots are on the ground”. With a little Hollywood flair, the training was packed with common scenarios that originated from returning Marines. They are acted out by professionally trained actors along side our Marines. Some were portraying insurgents and others were portraying everyday Iraqi civilians. These professionals never “broke” character so if we did not know how to “say it” in Arabic, we learned pretty quickly. Every Marine completed this training with a better understanding of the middle eastern culture and we look forward to a similar form of training (only significantly more intense) within “Mojave Viper”. This training will take almost the entire month of March and is one of the most important portions of our ramp up to deployment. Marines may not be able to communicate with you throughout this 30 day training so expect not to hear from him for a while. We have looked forward to this part of training and we thank you for all your support.

Congratulations to the Marines who have been promoted to the following ranks...

LCpl Moore
 LCpl Arsenault
 LCpl Diazgarcia
 LCpl Stone
 LCpl Hughesbullard
 LCpl McKellar
 LCpl Ly
 SSgt Sosa



Each “Company” has a different mailing address for receiving mail in Iraq. The Weapons Company address will be given to your Marine as soon as it becomes available

First Sergeant Charles Delcourt



Weapons Company Marines Take aim at Camp Pendleton



SSgt Sosa promoted in a Company Formation



Weapons Company Marines participating in the "Stu Seagull Studios" Roll Playing



Weapons Company Marine PFC stands his post during a "Stu Seagull drill"



Weapons Company Marines launch Mortars during one of many target practices



Weapons Company Marine SSgt Sosa shown again, I am glad he is on our team!

Hello Families!

This has been such a crazy but busy month for me so far! I keep reminding myself “this is a very good thing” because each day that goes by is a day closer to my Marine being home! Stay busy, get involved and most importantly, I would love to hear from you!

I have picked up a few recipes and here is a good one for taco dip.

"Taco Dip"



- 1 8oz pack cream cheese (soften)
- 1 LB hamburger
- 1 package taco seasoning mix
- 1/2 jar salsa
- 1 package shredded cheddar cheese

Spread cream cheese in the bottom of a casserole dish (I use a 7x10, fits perfect)
Cook hamburger with taco seasoning mix, then spread over cream cheese
Add salsa to cover hamburger
Top with cheese
Bake @ 350 until cheese is melted
Serve with favorite tortilla chips!

Enjoy!

"Happiness is often the result of being too busy to find misery"

-Anonymous



Speaking of keeping busy...

I found this quote and I now have a new mantra!

FROM YOUR BATTALION KEY VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

JULIE DELCOURT—PROUD MARINE WIFE

March 2006

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Ash Wednesday

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St. Patrick's
Day

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H & S Co.
Gathering

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SAVE THE DATE!!!

♥ March 25th

H & S Company Gathering—details TBA

♥ April 1—April Fools Day

Alpha Company Scrapbooking party.
Starts at 10 am @ Ft Devens HTC

♥ May 14th—Mother's Day

A "Mother's Tea" - open to all Mom's and
Wives. Details coming soon...♥ May 28th & 29th— Memorial Day
(2 day event)TROOPS IN THE SPOTLIGHT kick-off
ceremony starts at noon in Kmart plaza
parking lot in Hyannis MA.♥ September 24th— Boston Marine
Corps Honor Run 5k & 10 KAttention Runners: Please let me know if
you are interested in joining the "1/25"
Team**Troops in the spotlight...**

Last year, the Marines of 1st BN 25th MAR stood at attention for 17 out of the 24 hours (not consecutively) in a fundraiser called "Troops in the Spotlight". It was the most powerful day aside from an evening parade at 8th & I. This evening is the main fundraiser of an organization known as "Cape Cod Cares 4 the Troops". Started by a 13 year old boy named Dylan DeSiva, Cape Cod Cares 4 the Troops is the icon of patriotism. Dylan has no relative that is in the military, he just wanted to "help the troops over in Iraq and Afghanistan". He started mowing lawns, shoveling driveways, holding car drives and anything else he could think of in order to send care packages that were averaging about \$48/ package. The time came when all the lawns were mowed and

money was running out while the names of troops serving in Iraq that had "no one back home" where starting to add up. He had to make a decision. He turned to his mother and with conviction said, "the troops don't get a break, why should I?" From there, the non-profit organization was born. He asked his Mother's best friend who is a very popular local DJ also known as the "Rock Babe" to help get the word out and that she did. Although I was 8 months pregnant, I had to answer the cry for help I was hearing on the radio. We called in the 1/25 Marines and Doc Garin located on Cape Cod and we set up what is called an Attentionthon!

We had quite a cast of professionals. In addition to the Marines and Sailors of 1/25,

we also had the pleasure of meeting the Airmen from the 102nd out of Otis AFB and one of the Airmen was a pilot who was first on the seen for Sept. 11. He was spectacular to listen to. We had the Senior Master Chief from the Coast Guard (that would be the equivalent to the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps) and some exceptional Soldiers from the Army National Guard. We had a Brigadier General from Headquarters Marine Corps stop by while vacationing on ol' Cape Cod and he had tears in his eyes! Needless to say, Dylan surpassed his fundraising goal by a lot. The event raised over \$6000 and 6 truck loads of toiletries for our troops. Dylan has now sent 620 Care Packages to troops serving all over the world and



Our own GySgt Doug Morin at attention during Troops in the spotlight 2005

was honored at the 1/25 Birthday Ball this past year for his efforts. It's a colossal 24 hours for everyone who attends and most importantly, it will be held this year in honor of the Marines and Sailors of 1/25 since they can not stand for their 17 hours while in Iraq. Save the date and bring the tissues. This is a must see event for anyone who loves this country and the brave men and woman who serve it. **-Julie Delcourt**

*A very Happy Birthday
to our extended Marine Family Members
who celebrate a Birthday
in the Month of February*



Theresa Bruce
Louise Coldwell
Jennifer King
David Murray
Elizabeth Richardson
Christine Horner
Thomas Burke
Margaret Ahern
Stacy Ellman

Did we miss your Birthday?
Let us know and happy birthday to you too!

MILITARY KEEPSAKE BRACELETS

Keep your loved one in your thoughts and show your support with these beautiful bracelets!



Each ladies bracelet is handcrafted and made to order using sterling silver and 14K gold-filled beads, Swarovski crystals, and an optional Marines charm.

Ladies bracelets are available in sterling silver or two-tone. Little girl sizes start at \$45.00.

NEW! Italian link stretch bracelets! Perfect for men of all ages! Made from stainless steel and available in any combination of links that you choose! These bracelets start at \$30.00.

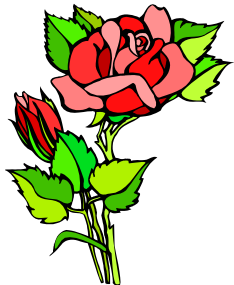


\$5 from the sale of every bracelet goes to support the 1st Battalion 25th Marines Key Volunteer Network.

For more information, please email:

karenprew@comcast.net

Key Volunteer Network
1st Battalion 25th Marines
4th Marine Division
53 Quebec Street
Devens RFTA
Ayer, Massachusetts 01432-4424



Mailing address

www.capecod4thetroops.com
CHECK IT OUT!

Your February Issue is here!

Sponsored by:

Cape Cod Cares for Our Troops

1831 Long Pond Road Brewster, MA. 02631 (508) 896.6424

www.capecod4thetroops.com



BRAVO FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Co B, 1st Battalion, 25th Marines (Londonderry, NH)

Feb 2006

EMERGENCIES

- If you have a family emergency, call Gunnery Sergeant Harrison at (603) 537-8002.
- If he is unavailable, ask for First Sergeant Maldonado at (603) 537-8004.
- If Manchester, NH is a long-distance call for you, dial 1 (800) 737-8762 code 03053. After normal working hours and on weekends or holidays call the duty cell phone at (603) 799-5068.

Company Mailing Address:

B Co, 1st Bn, 25th Marines,
4th MARDIV
64 Harvey Road, Suite 107
Londonderry, NH 03053

Phone: (603) 537-8000

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The **Peacetime / Wartime Support Team**, the **Family Readiness Officer**, and the **Key Volunteer Network** publish this newsletter in order to keep YOU, the Marine's families, informed of all the goings-on of Bravo Company.

If you are the parents, spouse, family member, or Employer of a Marine in Bravo Company, you should be getting a copy this Newsletter.

It is published quarterly while the unit is in regular Reserve status, and monthly when the unit is activated.

To get on the newsletter mailing list, or to submit information to it, contact the Family Readiness Officer, First Sergeant Maldonado at 603-537-8004.

B COMMANDING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

As Bravo Company continues to prepare for our impending deployment to Iraq, the Marines are being exposed to a myriad of new challenges. We have been training hard with few breaks and little time off. The Marines have completed a wide range of training in Twenty-nine Palms, all designed to prepare them for the mission we face in Iraq. A special emphasis has been placed on patrolling and combat in urban areas, conducting convoy operations and fighting as a close-knit combat team. Additionally, considerable emphasis has been placed on physical conditioning and acclimatization to the harsh desert environment. Quite a few of your Marines have become quite proficient with the Arabic language, a skill that will serve them well in our interactions with the Iraqi people.

Your Marines have worked very hard in our preparation for our deployment and have made great strides in their combat capabilities. The Bravo Company Marines are some of the finest men that I've ever had the pleasure of knowing and I am proud to be their commanding officer. You all have just cause to be very proud of your Marines.

Semper Fidelis,

Brian T. Hofmann
Major, USMC
Commanding Officer

*****DEPLOYED MARINES MAILING ADDRESS*****

Rank/Complete Name
1st Bn 25th Mar B Co
Unit 72185
FPO AE 09509-2185

Rank/Complete Name
1st Bn 25th Mar H&S Co
Unit 72195
FPO AE 09509-2195

*(This is for the Bravo Company Marines that are now assigned to H&S Company)

BATTALION COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

It is with great pride that I report to you the exceptional progress that has been made by the Marines and Sailors of 1st Battalion, 25th Marines. We have now completed our first 2 ½ months of training and our unit cohesion is evidenced in our fluid and successful mission execution. Your Marines and Sailors are working extremely hard under harsh and exhausting conditions as we prepare for our upcoming deployment to Iraq. By the time you read this letter you will hopefully have had an opportunity to hear first hand from your loved ones as we complete our block leave period. Upon our return from this period we will complete final preparations for our culminating 26-day training event called "Mojave Viper". During this exercise we will be tested to the limits of our endurance and decision-making abilities and we will learn, as we have at every stage of our pre-deployment training, that we have greater capacity both physically and mentally than we thought existed going into the event.

You should be very proud of your Marines and Sailors. I know I am. It is an honor and a privilege to lead these fine young men. I do not take this responsibility lightly. You have my assurance that your loved ones will be extremely well equipped and trained to carry out our mission in Iraq. They are truly great Americans and each represents what is best about this country in their own way. They are forming friendships and bonds of brotherhood that will be cherished their entire lives. As we head toward uncertainty it is the very certainty of this bonding that will see us through to the end of a successful tour. I know the anxiety that exists at home but you must take comfort in the knowledge that your loved one is in good hands and that we will take care of each other. They are willing to take on levels of sacrifice that few can even comprehend. They ask for little in return except your love and prayers and the thoughts of a grateful Nation.

Semper Fidelis,
LtCol Christopher Landro

Awards

All of the Marines listed below received a Meritorious Mast for their honorable service during the annual Toys for Tots Campaign in 2005:

**LCpl Nicholass Koutalakis
LCpl Peter J. O'Sullivan
LCpl Moussa B. Mikolo
LCpl Ugochukwu U. Ojimba
PFC Douglas B. Kramer**

Promotions

Promotions for the Month of January 2006

Promoted to the rank of Sergeant: Sgt Stephen P. McLaughlin
Sgt Steven J. Orr

Promoted to the rank of Corporal: Cpl Donald R. Weeks III
Cpl Janathan M. Palm
Cpl Charles N. Frangis

Promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal: LCpl Peter J. Figiel, Jr.

Promotions for the Month of February 2006

Promoted to the rank of Gunnery Sergeant: GySgt Shawn P. Demenkow

Promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal: LCpl Kenneth C. Dinjian, Jr.
LCpl Brian W. Bickmore
LCpl Ivon JeanJacques Jr.
LCpl Harold J. Litchfield

Birth Announcements

It's a Girl:

HM2 Ralph Beaman & Arpie Beaman are proud parents of a Healthy Baby Girl:
Briana Elizabeth Beaman
Born on 07Feb06
7pds 8onces 20" inches

It's a Girl:

PFC Artem Gretskey & Kirsten Gretskey are proud parents of a Healthy Baby Girl:
Amiliya Katrina Gretskey
Born on 03Feb06
8pds 4onces 19" inches

Key Volunteer Coordinator's Comments

Hello everyone!

Many of you already know me, but for those who do not know me I have been appointed Key Volunteer Coordinator for Bravo Co 1/25. I am the proud wife of Sgt Proulx and a stay at home mom of 3 beautiful boys, ages 11,7 and 2. I have had the great pleasure of meeting a lot of you and if I have not had the chance to meet you personally, I am sure that I have had the chance to meet your Marine. Our Marines are amazing men and stand very proud to be servicing our Country in Pride. I know that the families of Bravo Co stand equally proud of their United States Marine. I am just as proud of you, the family members!!

Over the past few weeks I have spoken with many of you, and explained the Key Volunteer Network and how it works to help the families. The soul purpose for the Key Volunteer Network is to be a service as a communication link between the unit and its families by relaying any unit news, including information on any upcoming events, fundraisers, and exciting family announcements. Each and every family member of Bravo Co has been appointed a Key Volunteer to help assist the families with any family issues. The Key Volunteers are in place to help pass the word about the unit and to help you in offering resource information and referrals for military-related problems. If you have not heard from your Key Volunteer yet please give me a call so that I can help you get connected. Please understand that your Volunteer is going through the same emotional roller coaster that you and your family are going through. My goal is to assign every one with some one that was close to them so that you are all there for each other since Bravo Co Marines reside all over New England area and then some.

As we all know the months ahead are going to be a difficult time and some are wondering how will we get through this? We will get through it and I am here to help you! The last deployment I asked myself the same thing through my own tears, "How am I going to do this?" I can tell you a couple reasons why I am so thankful I went through that deployment: I came to see what great friends and family I have that came through to help me and show me it was OK to ask for help when needed. I was able to meet some wonderful people that have now become life long friends. I was able to see how strong of a woman that I truly am but never really gave my self enough credit for. So, over the next few months of this new deployment, I hope that each and every one of you find some of the same experiences and grow to find yourselves just as strong in ways you did not know you could be.

I truly look forward to meeting you all and getting to know you better. Please know that you can contact me for anything anytime. You and the Marines of 1/25 are all in my thoughts and prayers.

News You Can Use

Family Readiness was established as a result of the merger of Human Services, Morale, Welfare and Recreation. Several separate family-related entities with similar functions were combined under the direction of a Marine Officer to unify their efforts. Though diverse, our focus is to build a strong bond between the service member, their family, and the Marine Corps.

Every aspect of Marine Corps Family Team Building is geared toward assisting Bravo's Commanding Officer and families in maintaining readiness. The time invested by the units and participants pays significant dividends in the enhanced readiness, knowledge and preparation of the Marines and their families.

Family Readiness Officer (FRO) - First Sergeant Maldonado is the FRO and an active duty member of the unit who serves as the direct link between the Key Volunteer Network and the Commanding Officer (CO). This individual oversees unit family readiness for Marines, Sailors, and their families.

Key Volunteer Network: Key Volunteers are spouses and parents of Marines within Bravo Company who serve as a communications link between the Command and unit families. The volunteers provide emotional, informational and referral support to family members, and work to build a cohesive unit community.

Bravo Company is looking to bring on as many Key Volunteers as possible.

If you would like to find out more about the Key Volunteer Network in Bravo Company, or would like to become a Key Volunteer, contact **First Sergeant Maldonado** (the FRO) at **603-537-8004**. Training for this important job is offered continually.

P/WST: The mission of the **Peacetime / Wartime Support Team** is to take care of the Bravo Company families by providing official information concerning the status of the Unit and their Marine. They answer questions the families may have about the mobilization and subsequent deployment, as well as questions about military life and benefits.

The P/WST is also the connection with the local communities, media, and businesses. Often a local business or group desires to contribute a product or service to the unit. The P/WST is the point of contact for all such matters.

Captain DiLullo, the P/WST Officer in Charge is available through email at **Matt@OnlineAlive.com**

Free Help and Support

OneSource is a **free** service for Marines, Sailors, and their families to get advice and information on just about anything. If you or a family member needs support in addressing issues related to relationships, parenting, managing everyday life, or re-adjusting after being in a combat zone, then a OneSource consultant can get you connected with a counselor in your community. Contact OneSource today to access: Online articles, worksheets and suggested reading lists; Educational materials: booklets, CDs, and audiotapes (at no cost to you); Locators (summer camp, child care, etc.); Parenting & Child Care; Personal & Family Readiness; Education; Midlife & Retirement; Older Adults; Disability; Financial; Legal; Everyday Issues; Work; Health; Emotional Well-Being; Addiction & Recovery; and much more!

This is a FREE service provided by your organization and is completely confidential.

Contact OneSource by phone at **800-869-0278**. A Spanish language line is available at (888) 732-9020. For family members with special needs, a TTY/TDD line is available at (800) 346-9188.

...or on the web at www.mccsonesource.com. The User ID is Marines, the password is Semper Fi.

ESGR: Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is an organization who's mission is to *"Gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve as defined by demonstrated employer commitment to employee military service."*

The ESGR can help Reservists to: resolve conflicts between work and drills; nominate employers for awards for supporting their Reservists; answer questions about the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Act; The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA); and more.

<http://www.esgr.org/>

Marine For Life: *"Our mission is to provide transition assistance to Marines who honorably leave active service and return to civilian life and to support injured Marines and their families."*

The Marine For Life is a unique program that helps Marines looking for Employment, and Employers who are looking to hire Marines.

<https://www.m4l.usmc.mil/>